

CM 1. A method of consumer cash value accumulation based upon point-of-sale transactions between consumers and merchants, the method comprising: ✓

P1 each merchant determining at least one
5 credit rate to be applied to selected purchases from that merchant;

P1 at the point-of-sale, obtaining from the
3 consumer an account number unique to the consumer and the consumer's birthdate;

P1 10 at a merchant location, determining a credit value for the transaction based upon the dollar amount of the transaction and the applicable credit rate determined by that merchant;

P1 3 15 providing to a central system for each transaction, the consumer's account number and birthdate, and the credit value;

P1 for each transaction, accumulating, at the
3 central system, cash value in a consumer account associated with that consumer's account number and
20 birthdate by adding the credit value to the cash value in that consumer account; and

P1 selecting at least one birthdate and providing for each consumer account associated with that birthdate access to funds in an amount based upon the
25 cash value in that consumer account.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
resetting to zero the cash value in each
consumer account for which access to funds is
provided.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein access to
funds is provided by issuing a check in an amount
equal to the cash value in that consumer account.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein access to
funds is provided through a funds dispensing
electronic terminal communicating with the central
system, and which dispenses the funds when properly
5 accessed.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein, for each
transaction, merchant data associated with the mer-
chant is transmitted to the central system along with
the consumer's account number and birthdate and the
3 credit value, the method further comprising:

P1 for each transaction, accumulating, at the
central system, bill value in a merchant account
associated with that merchant's merchant data by
adding the credit value to the bill value in that
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10 merchant's account; and

P1 generating for each merchant account a bill
in an amount based upon the bill value in that mer-
chant account.

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6. The method of claim 5 further comprising:
resetting to zero the bill value in each
merchant account for which a bill is generated.

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7. The method of claim 6 further comprising:
resetting to zero the cash value in each
consumer account for which access to funds is
provided.

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8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
assigning to each consumer a consumer
account number which is that consumer's unique Social
Security number.

9. A centralized consumer cash value system for transactions between consumers and multiple merchants comprising:

P1 at each merchant location at least: ✓

P2 5 consumer data input means at the
point-of-sale for inputting an account
number unique to the customer and the
3 consumer's birthdate;

P2 transaction data input means for
10 inputting the dollar amount of the point-
of-sale transaction; 0

P2 memory means for storing a credit rate
selected by the merchant;

SK 3/19/90 P2 processor means for determining a ^{credit} ~~cash~~
15 value based upon the dollar amount of the
point-of-sale transaction and the selected
credit rate; and

P2 first communication means for transmit-
3 ting to the central system the consumer's
20 account number and birthdate, and the credit
value related to each transaction; and

P1 at a central location, a central system having at
least:

P2 second communication means for receiv-
253 ing the consumer's account number and
birthdate, and the credit value related to
each transaction;

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consumer account memory means for storing cash values for a plurality of consumer accounts, each consumer account being associated with a respective, unique account number and one of a plurality of birthdates;

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processor means for incrementing the cash value in a consumer account associated with a received consumer account number and birthdate by an amount corresponding to the received credit value; and

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unit means for providing to each consumer having a selected birthdate access to funds in an amount based upon the cash value in the consumer account associated with that consumer.

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10. The system of claim ~~9~~, said processor means including means for resetting to zero the cash value in each consumer account for which access to funds is provided.

11. The system of claim ~~9~~, said unit means including a check printer whereby access to funds is by printing a check in an amount of the cash value in that consumer's account.

12. The system of claim 9 further comprising at least one funds dispensing electronic terminal communicating with said unit means for dispensing the funds.

13. The system of claim 9 wherein the first communication means also transmits and the second communication means also receives, related to each transaction, merchant data associated with the merchant along with the consumer's account number and birthdate and the credit value, the central system further having:

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merchant account memory means for storing bill values for a plurality of merchant accounts, each merchant account being associated with respective merchant data;

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said processor means further for incrementing the bill value in a merchant account associated with received merchant data by an amount corresponding to the received credit value; and

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means for issuing to each merchant a bill in an amount based upon the bill value in the merchant account associated with that merchant.

14. The system of claim 13, said processor means further for resetting to zero the ~~bill~~ value in each merchant account for which a bill is generated.

15. The system of claim 14, said processor means further for resetting to zero the cash value in each consumer account for which access to funds is provided.